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the present state. I should like to see the honest, justifiable contempt with which a hard-worked, sweating farmer turns up his nose at "picters" and "staters" penetrate into circles that lay claim to more culture and a broader sense. The bulk of the pictures and statues that are painted and carved, to-day, are contemptible; and the men who get high prices for them don't earn their money. They serve no useful purpose, teach nothing, move us not at all, elevate us not at all; and when the weathercock of fashion changes, will be consigned to the lumber-room with as little mercy as if they had never cost a cent. Meanwhile, the men who make them put on more and more airs every year. They are beginning to claim immunities. They won't be criticised. They cut the critic. They slander the critic. They challenge the critic. If they had their way, they would make laws against criticism.

Now, in America, nothing can be done to change this state of things until the mass of the people get different ideas, and feel an interest in that to which they are now profoundly indifferent. I wish I could see a noble cast, a good engraving, a single honest, faithful bit of study-from-nature, in every working-man's house in America. I wish we had a public collection like the British Museum, or the Louvre, or the South Kensington Museum, open to our people. I think that every school-room ought to

be made beautiful by the best Art. At present, the Free Academy is the only school I know of in the land that has anything that can be called Art in it, and that is confined to sculpture. But, something is wanted wider and deeper. Art is degenerating for want of new blood. It wants to be vitalized by mixing with the people. At present, it cares as little for them as they for it. You never see a laboring man in the Academy. What should he do there? Do you ever see one in a milliner's shop?

But you and I, my friend, desire a better day. And you have taken the Clytie home with you, to make a small beginning. She is an Italian, an exotic, but, for all that, a human being. She isn't, thank the Lord, a "Greek Slave," nor a "White Captive," nor an abstraction of any sort. And, by-and-by, some neighbor's child who has played in the room with her for years, and learned, without knowing it, to love her lovely face, her tender smile, will find himself trying to put into marble the thoughts she has awakened in him—thoughts not small and puny, maudlin and affected, but large, burning, manly thoughts; and we shall have an American statue worth looking at, something that rough men in the streets, fair women, bright boys, laughing girls shall like to look at, and that shall feed, and not belittle, what is earnest and honest in them. So hopes, so prays,

Your friend,

"THE NEW PATH."

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS IN THE ACADEMY.

FOR a number of years the display of architectural designs has formed a feature of the "Academy Exhibitions." Never a large or prominent portion of the exhibition, however, it has of late years dwindled nearly out of notice, which the architects excused on the ground that the small, ill-lighted room

to which their drawings were consigned gave very poor opportunity for their exhibition, and was a slight to the profession.

While the justice of this complaint was admitted, the hopes of those who, appreciating the noble study of architecture, desired a large and worthy exposi-

tion of the works of its followers, were turned to the new Academy-building, where drawings should not be hung in entries and umbrella-closets.

It is, then, with no slight degree of disappointment that the admirers of this art regard its very limited display in the present exhibition.

The new galleries are all equally well lighted; the hanging committee have treated the architects as fairly as other artists; the old grounds of complaint are removed, but, the collection is little larger than usual.

It has been remarked by our most accomplished architects, with profound regret, that the public taste, so far as their profession was concerned, has deteriorated during the last few years, owing, perhaps, to the sudden acquisition of wealth by the uncultivated, and the spreading desire to build quickly and showily for to-day, rather than well and nobly for both present and future.

If this alleged retrograde in public taste is really regretted by the architects, or if they desire a higher standard on the part of the public, could they do better than to place before them a large number of their best studies and designs? And though the multitudes that throng the Academy might not fully appreciate them, yet they would provoke comment, comparison, reflection, a healthy agitation leading to real progress.

The designs which should be first noticed (for the sake of giving the respect due to antiquity), are No. 110 and others by A. J. Davis. The drawings are yellow and weather-stained, and have probably figured at many an Academy-exhibition, but at such long intervals that, meantime, they have been forgotten, and for practical purposes are as good as new. Most of the buildings represented were erected some twenty or twenty-five years ago, and, like the drawings, are now in their dotage.

Yet these drawings serve a useful pur-

pose—that of marking the advance of architectural art during the last twenty-five years. At the commencement of that period such buildings were supposed to be paragons of fine taste and skill; with jealous eye did the “builder” of those days regard the architect who could send forth such “plans” from his office.

A comparison of these with the best modern designs in the collection makes fully evident the decided progress in the practice of this art. The views which led to and governed the designs of the architect twenty-five years since, will be seen to be widely different from those which inspire the best modern work. Castles, colleges, and temples were the goal for nearly all the efforts of the architects of those days. Few clients were considered so poor as not to be worthy of a lodgment in a castle or Grecian temple, and none so rich that their aspirations for display might not be fully met in the “English Collegiate Gothic.” (Vide 110.) These buildings had the advantage of being as well adapted to one family as another, but the disadvantage of being ill-adapted to any, for, a building of a certain character was erected, and the occupants left to adapt themselves and their wants to it, instead of the building being a tasteful expression of their comforts and enjoyments.

Did the architect anticipate that his clients, many of them practical, well-to-do business men, would, on their return from the day's *labor* in the city, desire so far to abandon themselves to the pleasures of imagination and sentiment, that, calling together their servants, they would spend the night in their watch-towers, or behind their battlements or parapets, waiting for encounter with mysterious and Quixotic foes?

A strong contrast to these buildings, both in motive and treatment, may be found in No. 150, “Design for a School-

house," by Vaux & Withers—a quaint and massy little building, and a very intelligible and sensible development of what may be supposed to be a very satisfactory plan. It wears no mask, does not weakly ape some building of greater dimension and elaboration, or of different purpose, but rejoices in a character and expression of its own, of which it has no reason to be ashamed.

The honesty of the design is at once apparent; free from needless features, the essential ones have been treated with such frankness and good sense that both the judgment and taste are gratified. The well-marked entrance, the groups of windows with their unique but simple voussairs, the quaint and quiet bell-turret, the bold chimney, the large dormer, together with the handsome masses of brick-work and slate, are the attractive features of this building, the whole expressing well its character and purpose.

No. 120—"Study for a Museum and Library"—by the same architects, possesses many of the qualities of the previous design. The entrance, however, seems unworthy the building, lacking force, impressiveness, and the quiet dignity pervading the most of the design. The basement windows do not appear to have nearly the depth of those above them, detracting from the appearance of solidity which the lower portion of such a building should present. The treatment of the oriel window is very successful and pleasing, as is also the engaged tower in its vicinity. We think, however, that the principal campanile should be loftier. The study possesses less sculptural decoration than might be expected in so important a building. The shields which ornament the lower portion are rather monotonous; their places might be filled with something more appropriate and interesting.

By way of contrast, again, it is worth while to notice No. 27—"Designs for a Block of Houses on Central Park,"—

H. H. Holly, architect. We find here a façade, the style of which seems to have been adopted from what is far from the best Parisian street architecture; there is a total lack of repose, caused, in no small measure, by the thorough breaking up of the plain wall-surface by projections, pilasters, and nondescript ornament which has no inherent beauty to apologize for the space it occupies.

The design fails to show any fresh or interesting details, though not without much that is curiously bad. Look, for instance, at the dormer windows, the larger of which are fashioned after the worst class of pier or toilet-glasses, and the smaller after the papier-maché mantel-clocks. It is greatly to be hoped that such architectural stumbling—"blocks" will not disfigure the vicinity of Central Park.

Design 108 and others by R. M. Hunt, show us the appearance of the various entrances to Central Park as they will be when completed.

So much interesting and beautiful work already graces the Park, that one might reasonably suppose the later additions would be influenced by this standard, advancing rather than falling behind it. The work already executed has been a most efficient means of public instruction—interesting whoever has seen it, causing reflection, comparison, and a constant elevation of taste.

Good as it is, however, there is opportunity for progress, improvement, and nobler results, which the public will be prepared to appreciate by their acquaintance with that already existing. Bearing this in mind as we look at design 108 and its companions, a few questions naturally arise. Do these later designs take up the work where the others left it, and mark a fresh and decided advance? Do they abound in features which increasing cultivation and taste will dwell upon again and again with renewed interest? Is the feeling and

sentiment of them appropriate to the place? An analysis, we think, will lead to quite an opposite conclusion. For instance, the architectural portions of 108 (and the companion drawings do not differ essentially in the work proposed to be executed) consist of three flag-staffs, eight common-looking pedestals, such as one may see in any cemetery, two large columns of the Corinthian order, surmounted by bulbous-shaped ornaments, and, last of all, two plain metal gates.

The sculptor, with his statuary, may give interest to this, provided he treat not of pagan or mythological subjects; but, what has the architect contributed to honor his art, to interest and instruct the public? What portion of it will be examined and remembered with pleasure? What impression, indeed, will be left of the general effect, except that architecture acted as a stolid porter to bear aloft the trophies of sculpture?

Men may indeed admire the height and straightness of the flag-staffs, wonder at the size of the stones forming the pedestals, or that the classic columns are so much loftier than those supporting their own shop-fronts, yet we cannot believe that they will tarry here long, but, rather, pass on to their old favorites—the sculptured flowers and animals of the terrace stair-case.

Adjoining this we find No. 55, "Design for a small Chapel or Chancel Organ," J. Cleveland Cady, architect. The aim in this design has evidently been to give on correct principles an economical and efficient pipe-organ, of a few stops, which may take the place of the overgrown accordeons, politely called Harmoniums, Cabinet Organs, etc. For, these instruments, however noisy they

may be, fall entirely short of the volume and purity possessed by a single stop of good pipes.

The principal features of this organ are, apparently, its effectiveness, economy, and expression of purpose. The pipes not being boxed up as usual, are free to let forth their unmuffled voices—a decided gain in power, as well as a considerable saving of expense; and the straight-forward manner of treating and honoring the *pipes* (which are the individuality of the instrument) gives it a proper and characteristic expression.

Our organ-cases usually represent miniature temples or cathedrals, in the windows of which a few pipes are allowed to stand; but, this is certainly no proper development of the organ itself, but merely a thoughtless, indolent way of passing over the matter. Better far to develop the graceful gradations and combinations of pipes, the simplest form of which artists of all ages have delighted in depicting St. Cecilia as bearing in her arms.

No. 28 has the appearance of a congress or convention of Mr. Vaux's country-seats, lacking, as it does, unity of design, breadth, and subordination. Its lofty mansard roofs, and absence of ostentation, must, however, be mentioned to its credit. Time and space do not permit us to notice the few remaining designs in the collection, which are by the same architects as the works already noticed, and possess similar merits or defects.

Another season, let us hope, will show a large increase in the number of designs, especially of those which contain freshness of thought, and exhibit a studious and healthful progress.